

## Message Text

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ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 IO-11 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

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USIA-06 OMB-01 /077 W

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R 091105Z MAR 76

FM AEMBASSY ABIDJAN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7427

INFO AMEMBASSY ACCRA

AMEMBASSY BAMAKO

AMEMBASSY COTONOU

AMEMBASSY DAKAR

AMEMBASSY LOME

AMEMBASSY MONROVIA

AMEMBASSY LAGOS

AMEMBASSY NIAMEY

AMEMBASSY OUAGADOUGOU

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

USUN NEW YORK 531

C O N F I D E N T I A SECTION 1 OF 2 ABIDJAN 2304

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PINT, IV

SUB: SIGNIFICANCE OF IVORY COAST CABINET RESHUFFLE

REF: ABIDJAN 2185

SUMMARY: THE IVORY COAST CABINET RESHUFFLE ANNOUNCED MARCH 4 (REFTTEL), WAS WITH ONE EXCEPTION, A RELATIVELY MINOR ONE.

SEVERAL OLDER OR LESS DYNAMIC MINISTERS WERE MOVED ASIDE AND REPLACED BY YOUNGER MEN. IN THE SELECTION OF NEW APPOINTEES

A CONSCIOUS EFFORT WAS MADE TO ACHIEVE A BETTER BALANCED GEOGRAPHIC AND TRIBAL REPRESENTATION. THE ONE CHANGE OF PARTICULAR INTEREST WAS THE REEMERGENCE INTO POLITICAL LIFE OF JEAN BAPISTE MOCKEY, FORMER PDCI SECRETARY GENERAL

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IMPLICATED IN THE ALLEGED PLOTS OF 1963. MOCKEY'S NOMINAT-

TION AS MINISTER OF STATE REPRESENTS THE CULMINATION OF HOUPHOUET'S POLICY OF REHABILITATION AND RECONCILIATION OF THE FORMER LEADERS INVOLVED IN THOSE EVENTS. ALSO OF POSSIBLE FUTURE SIGNIFICANCE IS THE WHITTILING AWAY OF THE POWERS OF THE MINISTERS OF FINANCE AND INTERIOR UNDER THE NEW GOVERNMENT.END SUMMARY.

1. THE CABINET RESHUFFLE ANNOUNCED MARCH 4 WAS LONG-DESIRED AND LONG-AWAITED. IN THE WAKE OF THE NATIONAL ELECTIONS HELD IN DEC, IT HAD BEEN WIDELY EXPECTED THAT THE NEW GOVERNMENT WOULD BE NAMED IN JANUARY AS HAD BEEN THE PATTERN FOLLOWING THE PREVIOUS ELECTIONS IN 1970.

2. IN THE EVENT, THE CHANGES WERE FEWER THAN SOME HAD SPECULATED, WITH NONE OF THE KEY MINISTERS (FOREIGN AFFAIRS, PLAN, AGRICULTURE, ECONOMY, AND FINANCE) LEAVING GOVERNMENT. FIVE MINISTERS WERE REPLACED AND SEVEN NEW ONES NAMED, BRINGING THE TOTAL IN THE CABINET FROM 34 TO 36.

3. OF THE FIVE REPLACED, THREE (BLAISE N'DIA KOFFI, GERMAIN COFFI GADEAU, AND SOULEYMANE CISSOKO) WERE IN THEIR SIXTIES, CONSIDERED OLD BY IVORIAN STANDARDS. THE LAST OF THESE, CISSOKO, HAS A HEALTH PROBLEM AND IS KNOWN TO HAVE REQUESTED RETIREMENT. NONETHELESS THERE WAS SOME SURPRISE THAT COFFI GADEAU, A PARTY MILITANT FROM THE EARLIEST DAYS, WAS NOT RETAINED IN AN HONORIFIC MINISTER OF STATE POSITION. HE MAY YET BE GIVEN ANOTHER HONORARY JOB IN A STATE-RUN ORGANIZATION. OF THE TWO YOUNGER MEN REMOVED, TADJO EHOUE HAD BEEN RUMORED FOR REPLACEMENT BECAUSE OF HIS LACK OF ADMINISTRATION OF THE CIVIL SERVICE. HIS SUCCESSOR, KEI BOUGUINARD, IS A WIDELY-RESPECTED, DYNAMIC FIGURE WITH EXPERIENCE IN ADMINISTRATION AS WELL AS A HEAVYWEIGHT IN THE INNER CIRCLES OF THE PARTY. FINALLY, THE DEMISE OF DR. HOPKINS AYE IS SEEN BY SOME AS DUE TO THE FACT THAT HE IS TOO SELF-EFFECTING A TECHNOCRAT AND NOT ENOUGH OF THE AGGRESSIVE POLITICIAN NEEDED TO LEAD A MINISTRY.

4. THE OFFICIAL EMPHASIS GIVEN IN THE PRESS TO THE NEW MINISTERS NAMED TO REPLACE THE ABOVE WAS ON YOUTH AND EQUITABLE REGIONAL (AND TRIBAL) REPRESENTATION. OF THE SEVEN NEW

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MINISTERS, FIVE ARE IN THEIR THIRTIES OR FORTIES. GEOGRAPHIC REPRESENTATION WAS PARTICULARLY DIVERSE WITH TWO NOMINEES COMING FROM THE FAR WEST AND ONE EACH FROM THE COAST, THE CENTER, THE SOUTHEAST, AND NORTHEAST OF THE COUNTRY. ONLY ONE OF THE NEW APPOINTEES IS A BAOULE, HOUPHOUET-BOIGNY'S TRIBE WHICH INHABITS THE CENTER OF THE COUNTRY AND ABOUT WHICH MUTED CRITICISM IS OCCASIONALLY HEARD FOR TAKING A DISPROPORTIONATE SHARE OF THE POLITICAL OFFICES OF THE COUNTRY. ALSO

INCLUDED. NO DOUBT INTENTIONALLY, ARE REPRESENTATIVES OF MINORITY TRIBES WHICH HAVE SUFFERED FROM SOME UNDER-REPRESENTATION BEACUSE OF PAST POLITICAL DIFFERENCES. AMONG THESE IF FRANCOIS DAKOUREY TABLEY, A POLITICAL UNKNOWN WHO HAS BEEN LIVING PRIVATELY AS A PHARMACIST IN BOUAKE BUT WHO IS A MEMBER OF THE BETE TRIBE WHICH LED THE ANTI-GOVERNMENT DISTURBANCES IN GAGNOA IN 1970. DAUKOUREY'S FATHER WAS ONE OF THE EARLY STAUNCH SUPPORTERS OF HOUPHOUET. ALSO AMONG THESE IS DR. EMIL BROU, NAMED TO THE LARGELY NON-SUBSTANTIVE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY RELATIONS, WHO IS AN AGNI FROM ABENGOUROU, AN AREA WHICH HAS AT TIMES BEEN AT ODDS WITH THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT. WITH THE EXCEPTION OF DOAKOUREY, ALL THE MINISTERS ARE MEMBERS OF TH SENIOR ORGANS OF THE PARTY, FIVE BEING MEMBERS OF TH HIGHEST LEVEL, THE POLITICAL BUREAU, AND ONE (EMIL BROU) OF THE NEXT TO HIGHEST LEVEL, THE DIRECTORY COMMITTEE.

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5. THE ONLY APPOINTMENT OF MAJOR SIGNIFICANCE IN THE NEW GOVERNMENT IS THAT OF JEAN BAPTISTE MOCKEY TO MINISTER OF STATE FOR PUBLIC HEALTH AND POPULATION, RANKING NUMBER THREE ON THE PROTOCOL LIST OF THE NEW CABINET. MOCKEY IS A FORMER SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE PDCI/RDA AND ONE OF THE FOUNDERS OF THE PARTY ALONG WITH HOUPHOUET. HIS PRESTIGE AND POPULARITY WERE SUCH THAT HE WAS ONE OF THE FEW MEN EVER CONSIDERED A SERIOUS RIVAL TO HOUPHOUET. IMPLICATE IN THE ALLEGED COUP PLOTS OF 1963 (ALLEGATIONS WHICH THE GOIC HAS LATTERLY COME TO BELIEVE WERE BASELESS), MOCKEY SPENT SEVERAL YEARS IN PRISON. SINCE HIS RELEASE HE HAS REMAINED IN PRIVATE LIFE RUNNING A SUCCESSFUL PHARMACY IN ABIDJAN, RESISTING UNTIL LAST YEAR ALL OVERTURES MADE TO HIM TO BE RECONCILED TO THE PARTY  
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LEADERSHIP (HIS ENMITY WITH PHILIPPE YACE WAS SAID TO BE EVEN DEEPER THAN THAT WITH HOUPHOUET) AND TO ACCEPT A POST IN GOVERNMENT. IN OCT HE WAS BROUGHT BACK INTO THE POLITICAL BUREAU AND NOW INTO THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS. HIS NOMINATION IS SEEN BY SOME THEREFORE, IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE GEOGRAPHIC AND TRIBAL DIVERSITY IN THE NEW GOVERNMENT, TO REPRESENT AN EFFORT BY HOUPHOUET AT RECONCILIATION AND NATIONAL INTEGRATION IN PREPARATION FOR THE INEVITABLE TRANSFER OF POWER WHEN HOUPHOUET DEPARTS FROM THE SCENE.

6. IN KEEPING WITH THE EMPHASIS ON YOUTH IN THE NEW GOVERNMENT, HOUPHOUET ANNOUNCED THAT THE NINE YOUNGER MEN HOLDING JUNIOR MINISTER POSITIONS (SECRETARIES OF STATE) WOULD BE ELEVATED TO THE FULL RANK OF MINISTER, AND THEIR OFFICES RAISED TO MINISTRY STATUS. THIS MOVE AFFECTS THE PREVIOUSLY EXISTING MINISTRIES IN A VARIETY OF WAYS. TWO OF THESE ARE OF PARTICULAR INTEREST AND COULD BE OF SOME SIGNIFICANCE. THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INTERIOR COL. OUASSENAN KONE IS RAISED TO MINISTER FOR INTERNAL SECURITY. HE WILL PRESUMABLY RETAIN HIS DIRECTION OF THE POLICE AND SECURITY FORCES WHICH MAY THEREFORE NO LONGER BE UNDER THE OVERALL JURISDICTION OF THE MINISTER OF STATE MATHIEU EKR, ONE OF THE MOST SENIOR AND POWERFUL POLITICAL FIGURES IN THE PARTY AND GOVERNMENT. WHETHER THIS WILL IN FACT REPRESENT A WHITTLED AWAY OF EKRA'S POWER AND WHETHER EKRA WILL BE HAPPY WITH THE APPARENTLY ONLY VESTIGIAL POWERS REMAINING TO HIM AS MINISTER OF INTERIOR REMAINS TO BE SEEN. THE SECOND SHIFT WHICH BEARS WATCHING IS CREATING A MINISTRY OF BUDGET (ABDOULAYE KONE) AND POSSIBLY REMOVING IT FROM UNDER THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE AND ECONOMY (HENRI KONAN BEDIE). THIS, TOGETHER WITH THE ELEVATION OF MINES TO MINISTRY STATUS AND POSSIBLY OUT FROM UNDER BEDIE, IS THE THIRD SLICE OF

BEDIE'S DOMAIN TAKEN FROM HIM IN RECENT YEARS (COMMERCE BECAME A SEPARATE MINISTRY IN 1974). HOW MUCH CONTROL OVER BUDGETARY MATTERS BEDIE WILL IN FACT RETAIN IS UNKNOWN, BUT THE MOVE IS APPARENTLY A DIMINUTION OF BEDIE'S STATURE.

7. FINALLY, THE NAMING OF THE FIRST WOMAN MINISTER IN THE IVORY COAST GOVERNMENT WAS NOT A SURPRISE. THE RECENT PARTY CONGRESS LAID HEAVY EMPHASIS ON PARTICIPATION BY WOMEN IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE NATION. THIS WAS FOLLOWED BY INCREASING CONFIDENTIAL

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THE NUMBER OF WOMEN DEPUTIES IN THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY AND IN THE DIRECTORY COMMITTEE OF THE PARTY, AS WELL AS NAMING THE FIRST WOMEN TO THE POLITICAL BUREAU. THE NAMING OF A WOMEN MINISTER WAS THEREFORE EXPECTED AND MADAME JEANNE GERVAIS WAS A LOGICAL CHOICE AS A MEMBER OF THE POLITICAL BUREAU AND PRESIDENT OF THE IVORIAN WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION.

8. IMPLICATIONS FOR THE U.S. IN THE CABINET CHANGES ARE NIL. RESHUFFLE IS ESSENTIALLY A MINOR ONE, WITH THE EMPHASIS BEING ON CONTINUITY THROUGH REJUVENATION, RECONCILIATION, AND EQUITABLE REPRESENTATION OF REGIONAL AND TRIBAL ORIGIN. A FEW OF THE FACES HAVE CHANGED, BUT NONE OF THE KEY MINISTERS WITH WHOM THE EMBASSY HAS TO DEAL HAVE SHIFTED. IN ANY EVENT, IN IVORY COAST IT IS HOUPHOUET-BOIGNY WHO SETS MAJOR POLICY AND MAKES THE IMPORTANT DECISIONS. SO LONG AS HE IS AT THE HELM THE BASIC ORIENTATION OF THE GOIC WILL NOT CHANGE. IN THIS CONNECTION, WHETHER OR NOT HOUPHOUET WAS CONSCIOUSLY LOOKING (AS SOME SUGGEST) TOWARD THE EVENTUAL TRANSFER OF POWER IN MAKING THE MOCKERY NOMINATION, THE RENAISSANCE OF THIS ONCE HIGHLY POWERFUL FIGURE IS CLEARLY A POLITICAL EVENT THAT WILL BEAR WATCHING.

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